

Designing the development paradigmatic model of sports marketing in Iranian schools

Designing the development paradigmatic model of sports marketing in Iranian schools

ABSTRACT

Purpose

The purpose of the current research was to design a model for the development of sports marketing in Iranian schools with the foundation data approach.

Design/methodology/approach

Given the exploratory nature of this research, a grounded theory method with a systematic approach was employed. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews. The research findings were evaluated using conventional methods to ensure their reliability. The research participants included 13 experts who were purposively selected, comprising professors of sports management, members of the student sports federation, former heads of the General Department of Education, and sports teachers.

Findings

The result of the data analysis was the extraction of 94 concepts in the form of 19 categories that play a role in developing the school sports marketing development model. Among these, 3 categories of contextual conditions (sports governance, interaction and institutional communication and entrepreneurship and innovation in sports), 3 categories of causal conditions (economic stability and stability, media management and knowledge-based economy in sports), 2 categories of intervening conditions (cultural development and resistance economy in schools), 6 strategy categories (branding of events, management of stakeholders, synergy with the private sector, training of human resources, agility of marketing plans and revision and amendment of laws) and 5 categories were categorized as consequences (promotion of economic thinking in sports, development of educational sports, organization of school sports equipment, performance monitoring and development of talent management in schools as consequences of the economic discourse model of school sports).

Originality

The current research can use school sports to achieve marketing goals by designing a model for the development of sports marketing in Iranian schools.

Keywords

Educational Sport, Grounded Theory, Sports Marketing.

Paper type

Research Article

طراحی مدل توسعه بازاریابی ورزش مدارس ایران

طراحی مدل توسعه بازاریابی ورزش مدارس ایران

چکیده

هدف

هدف پژوهش حاضر طراحی مدل توسعه بازاریابی ورزش مدارس ایران با رویکرد داده بنیاد بود.

روش

با توجه به اکتشافی بودن ماهیت پژوهش حاضر، از روش داده بنیاد با رویکرد سیستماتیک استفاده شد و روش گردآوری داده‌ها مبتنی بر انجام مصاحبه‌های نیمه ساختاریافته بود. یافته‌های پژوهش به شیوه‌های متداول مورد ارزیابی قرار گرفت تا از قابلیت اعتماد آنها اطمینان حاصل شود. مشارکت‌کنندگان پژوهش ۱۳ تن از خبرگان شامل اساتید مدیریت ورزشی، اعضای فدراسیون ورزش دانش آموزی، روسای سابق اداره کل آموزش و پرورش و دبیران ورزش بودند که به صورت هدفمند انتخاب شدند.

یافته‌ها

نتیجه تحلیل داده‌ها، استخراج ۹۴ مفهوم در قالب ۱۹ مقوله بود که در تدوین مدل توسعه بازاریابی ورزش مدارس نقش دارند. از این میان ۳ مقوله شرایط زمینه‌ای (حکمرانی ورزشی، تعامل و ارتباطات نهادی و کارآفرینی و نوآوری در ورزش)، ۳ مقوله شرایط علی (ثبات و پایداری اقتصادی، مدیریت رسانه‌ای و اقتصاد دانش بنیان در ورزش)، ۲ مقوله شرایط مداخله‌گر (توسعه فرهنگی و اقتصاد مقاومتی در مدارس)، ۶ مقوله راهبرد (برندسازی رویدادها، مدیریت ذی‌نفعان، هم افزایی با بخش خصوصی، آموزش منابع انسانی، چابک‌سازی برنامه‌های بازاریابی و بازنگری و اصلاح قوانین) و ۵ مقوله به عنوان پیامد (ترویج تفکر اقتصادی در ورزش، توسعه ورزش تربیتی، ساماندهی تجهیزات ورزشی مدارس، پایش و نظارت عملکرد و توسعه مدیریت استعدادیابی در مدارس به عنوان پیامدهای الگوی گفتمان اقتصادی ورزش مدارس) دسته‌بندی شدند.

اصالت و ابتکار مقاله

این مطالعه با طراحی مدل توسعه بازاریابی ورزش مدارس ایران می‌تواند از ورزش مدارس در رسیدن به اهداف بازاریابی استفاده کند.

کلید واژه

بازاریابی ورزشی، نظریه داده بنیاد، ورزش تربیتی

1. Introduction

Sport, as a social phenomenon and one of the important scientific systems, plays an unparalleled role in the psychological and social growth of individuals. This role is particularly significant during childhood, adolescence, and maturity, and can lead to an overall improvement in individuals' conditions and create a lifelong learning process (Savari et al., 2021). Sport provides a unique context for the psychosocial development of individuals because it is categorized as an environment where children and young people dedicate more motivation, time, energy, and focus compared to other environments such as school. In sports, there are various opportunities for children and adolescents to develop personal and interpersonal skills that can enhance their well-being (Bedard et al., 2020). The younger generation spends most of their time in schools, and since the educational system of each country can significantly contribute to the development of sports and the recognition of talents, and assist in the growth of competitive sports, special attention must be given to school sports (Rabiei et al., 2023). School sports are identified as the foundation for the development of sports in countries. Investment in the domain of school sports has led to its recognition as a cornerstone for sports development today (Darnell et al., 2019). Student sports, as part of the Physical Education and Health Department in Education, provide an opportunity for talent to flourish and for ethical and physical merits to be reflected (Hamidi et al., 2018). Since the lack of development in school sports hinders the progress of public and competitive sports, this issue can be addressed by identifying obstacles, consulting with relevant officials and policymakers, and fostering the growth of sports in the country (Vafaei Moghadam et al., 2018). Moreover, schools are a suitable place for interventions and allow students to acquire and develop the skills and strategies needed to face life's challenges in the best possible way, with a high level of physical and psychological well-being (Cronin et al., 2020). Developed countries utilize the development of school sports to promote sports in various dimensions. Investment in schools creates a favorable outlook for sports (Camiré & Kendellen, 2016).

The importance of sports in schools has led to significant efforts in this regard. Extensive financial resources have been directed towards the development of school sports, which has resulted in an improvement in both the quality and quantity of sports in schools. However, in Iran, there are major problems in the development of school sports. Specific financial weaknesses in the education system in Iran have caused school sports to face serious challenges (Javidi et al., 2021). Sports organizations, like non-sports organizations, are exposed to environmental and global changes and face their own unique issues. Managers of professional, amateur, and university sports organizations must effectively manage challenges such as exorbitant costs, highly competitive markets, growing fan dissatisfaction and disconnection, and the explosive growth of new technologies to survive in the sports business environment (Eagleman, 2013). Therefore, investment in the field of sports leads to reduced costs in the healthcare sector, treatment centers, and social misconduct prevention centers, and lowers the level of individual and social abnormalities (Beneli et al., 2017).

Planning physical education in schools is inherently complex and challenging. Perhaps the most significant reason and the greatest challenge is that physical education and sports comprise a blend of two entirely separate domains: marketing and sports, each managed independently. This implies that neither of these units holds complete responsibility for sports marketing (Minten & Forsyth, 2014). The burgeoning trend in sports marketing has had profound effects on global sports development and has managed to attract substantial financial resources, extensive advertising benefits, and broad socio-cultural and political advantages for stakeholders in this industry. In today's competitive environment, achieving optimal performance in marketing has become a fundamental concern for managers who strive to excel using various techniques. Marketing capabilities are crucial factors in achieving competitive advantages and superior performance for organizations (Zolfaghari et al., 2023). In the present era, marketing is essential for any deliberate and targeted action in today's market—a market that recognizes no borders and targets no specific customers. Today's marketing motto for all entrepreneurs, managers, and professional marketers can be summarized in this brief phrase: think globally, act locally (Lee et al., 2018). Furthermore, establishing a marketing unit is considered an innovative achievement for developing any organization, regardless of its nature, which is part of the revenue generation process. Marketers formulate plans in various sports fields to impact their audience and establish bilateral communication. Socially, marketing serves as a tool for individuals and groups to obtain what they desire through the production, supply, and exchange of valuable products and services. Activities that garner positive reactions from audiences should be targeted for precise and appealing imagery (Kamalvand & Afshari, 2021). Providing a model for school sports marketing and theoretical foundations in sports data mining offers a benchmark for evaluating activities, specifying beneficial programs for defining what must be accomplished in school sports and setting goals for measuring the success or failure of managers and organizations (Eizadi et al., 2017). Moreover, attention to sports and its development and enhancement constitutes a decisive component in the marketing industry (Miller et al., 2012).

In reviewing the background and past research relevant to the research topic, it can be noted that the importance of developing student sports has been highlighted. In this regard, Rastogi et al. (2017) demonstrated in their examination of the state of physical education development in various countries that despite the presence of good methods and programs in the field of school sports development, there are significant failures observed in these development programs. This issue is attributed to the absence of a long-term and comprehensive plan. These findings indicate the necessity of long-term and comprehensive planning for the development of school sports (Rastogi et al., 2017). Mirzaei Kalar and colleagues (2020) showed that the development of student sports is a dynamic process, and for achieving development outcomes, stakeholders, strategies, processes, and development paths need to work together. Therefore, policymakers and planners must consider stakeholders, strategies, processes, and development paths when formulating policies and programs for student sports development (Mirzaei Kalar et al., 2020). Furthermore, Ghanbari Firouzabadi et al.

(2020), in their research, identified the components of human resources, financial resources, space and equipment, and the implementation of physical education lessons and extracurricular activities as causal factors. They also introduced managerial, socio-cultural, media and technology, and scientific sports management components as contextual conditions affecting the development of student sports. Additionally, financial, political, and economic components were identified as intervening conditions, while structural development strategies, managerial actions, human resource development, income development, space and equipment development, cultural development, and extracurricular program development were stated as strategies for the development of student sports (Ghanbari Firouzabadi et al., 2020). Sarlak and Kaveh (2022) also elucidated the challenges of educational sports in the country, showing that the shortage of human resources and the lack of sports facilities and equipment are the most important barriers to the development of educational sports. The research results indicated that comprehensive planning is necessary to address these issues because the development of educational sports plays a significant role in shaping students' lifestyles (Sarlak & Kaveh, 2022).

Additionally, some researchers have conducted studies on the importance of marketing in sports, particularly in school sports. Nasrollahi Ghadim and colleagues (2022), in a study titled "Designing a Model for Integrated Marketing Communication Tools (IMC) for Wrestling of Iran" found that the use of an integrated marketing model can increase the attractiveness of wrestling, attract spectators, gain financial sponsors, and ultimately boost revenue. This research highlights the importance of using integrated marketing models in the development of school sports as well (Nasrollahi Ghadim et al., 2022). Dost Mohamadi et al. (2020), in a study titled "Identifying the components of student sports marketing and designing a model using an interpretive structural method" concluded that student sports marketing variables are categorized into five levels, with marketing performance and financial support at the first level and marketing strategy at the last level. According to the findings, it is necessary to create a proper student sports marketing strategy plan by attracting financial supporters and improving the services provided in student sports to facilitate the development of student sports marketing (Dost Mohamadi et al., 2020). Shahmansouri and colleagues (2021) found that the use of creative and innovative methods by managers of sports complexes can contribute to profitability and customer satisfaction. These findings emphasize the importance of using modern marketing elements in the development of school sports (Shahmansouri et al., 2021). Savari et al. (2021), in their research, concluded that motivational, individual, facilities, structural and managerial, socio-cultural, and economic factors are respectively the factors of the student health model. This study highlights the importance of considering various factors in designing a school sports marketing development model (Savari et al., 2021). Zohrevandian (2021), in a study titled "designing model of Conversion of marketing capabilities to function in football clubs of Iran Premier League" concluded that the presented model can help identify the marketing capabilities of football clubs and convert these capabilities into performance (revenue generation). This model can also be similarly used in schools (Zohrevandian, 2021). Rosales & Tito (2022), in a study titled "Sports

Marketing Communications in South America" showed that sports have become an excellent communication platform through the organization of events. Sports competitions broadcasted by various networks attract more fans and companies worldwide. These findings can be useful in developing school sports marketing strategies (Rosales & Tito, 2022). Winand and Anagnostopoulos (2019) indicated that strong fan support for their favorite club increases social identity as well as enhances and develops the brand equity of the club. This suggests that similar support can be leveraged in school sports (Winand & Anagnostopoulos, 2019). Maadi et al. (2024), in a study titled " The pattern of integrated marketing communications in physical education and sports of the Ministry of Education" concluded that causal factors include the school environment and market ecosystem, human capital, culture building, and infrastructure as contextual factors; advertising campaigns, branding, public relations, and direct marketing as intervening factors; and financing, promotion, education structure, and identifying marketing methods as strategies. The outcomes of this model included the economic development of education, empowerment, and improvement of sports services (Maadi et al., 2024). Dost Mohamadi et al. (2023), in a study titled " Identifying Factors and Presenting the Marketing Model of Iranian Student Sports" concluded that the most important factors in managing student sports marketing in Iran include advertising for competitions, attracting financial support, information systems, brand development, and event quality. These findings highlight the importance of effective planning for improving the quality of sports events and designing and registering sports brands specific to schools (Dost Mohamadi et al., 2023).

By reviewing the research and studies conducted in the field of sports and its educational approach over the years, it is evident that issues such as the lack of sports facilities, appropriate equipment and spaces, and insufficient budget relative to the number of athletes still persist. Unfortunately, the sports marketing index in schools has also been poorly addressed. These deficiencies have led to a significant decrease in the development of sports among students and have hindered optimal progress in this area. Therefore, in this research, the researcher aims to understand what the sports marketing model in schools is? What strategies should be adopted for sports marketing in schools? Additionally, after identifying the necessary strategies, what will be the outcomes of the proposed school sports marketing model? Thus, considering the aforementioned issues, the objective of the present study is to design a paradigmatic model for the development of sports marketing in Iranian schools.

2. Methodology

The present research adopted a qualitative approach employing a data-driven method and systematic methodology (following Strauss and Corbin). This approach relies on a three-stage coding process: open coding, axial coding, and selective coding. In this regard, it utilizes a logical paradigm or theoretical diagram to create theory. Following the open coding process, the researcher identifies a central phenomenon (the main issue) within the ongoing process of investigation and exploration and subsequently

relates other concepts to it. The theory derived from such a method is a process theory that systematically collects data to identify themes, concepts, and establish relationships among them. To select participants for semi-structured interviews, efforts were made to engage experts familiar with the research topic. As a result, 13 individuals were interviewed in this study (Table 1), comprising 8 males and 5 females. Additionally, 9 of the interviewees held doctoral degrees, while 4 held master's degrees. The interviews continued until theoretical saturation was achieved.

Table 1. Describing the demographic characteristics of the interviews.

Row	Participants	Number
1	Member of the faculty of sports management	6
2	Former head of the General Department of Education	2
3	Employee of Student Sports Federation	3
4	Physical education teacher	2

Various perspectives have been highlighted by researchers regarding the criteria for evaluating the processes and outcomes of qualitative research; some have proposed criteria for the credibility and reliability of qualitative research, including credibility, transferability, dependability, and conformability (Danaeefard & Mozafari, 2008). For validating the validity of the research, the researcher provided the results of the study in the form of tables and reports to several coders, and the credibility of the definitions and findings of the research as well as the generalizability of the findings were reviewed and confirmed by them. Moreover, the findings were compared with those of other researchers and existing theories to establish their validity, correctness, and significance. Additionally, ensuring the accuracy and trustworthiness is a crucial step in the qualitative data analysis process; therefore, Cohen's Kappa coefficient method was utilized to measure the validity of the research. Cohen's Kappa is one of the statistical decision-making tools used to determine the degree of agreement and consistency between two individuals on a phenomenon, each demonstrating a phenomenon separately or in an independent examination; The Kappa coefficient ranges from -1 to +1. The closer the value is to +1, the greater the degree of agreement. Conversely, the closer the value is to -1, the greater the degree of inverse agreement. Additionally, values close to zero indicate no agreement. (Pourabdi et al., 2021). In this context, the researcher, after designing the questions for the research method, provided them to two coders. After calculation, a Cohen's Kappa coefficient of 0.8 was obtained.

3. Results

The qualitative data analysis yielded 94 concepts, which were classified into 19 themes within the axes of the foundational data-driven paradigm. To accomplish this, initially, in the open coding stage, as previously described, concepts relevant to the

research topic were extracted through repeated examination of the interview transcripts (Table 2). Subsequently, through consolidation and integration of concepts, distinct final codes and similar codes were labeled as encompassing themes (second column of Tables 3 to 7). In the following stage, by reviewing the extracted themes and referring back to the interview texts, axial coding was conducted, and themes were categorized into causal conditions, contextual factors, interventions, strategies, and outcomes (Tables 3 to 7). It is worth mentioning that selective coding was simultaneously performed in all these stages. Initially, the discourse of the economic aspect of school sports was chosen as the central phenomenon, and other axes were adjusted, modified, and expanded based on it. In the open coding stage, initial concepts are extracted, and analytically, this can be done row by row, phrase by phrase, or paragraph by paragraph, or as separate pages.

Table 2. An example of initial coding of interviews and extraction of concepts.

Interview Text	Concept
For the presentation of a marketing model in any field, attention must first be paid to the political and economic environment of that society, as without the necessary stability and consistency, it is not possible to achieve appropriate goals and visions.	Political and economic stability
One of the ways to facilitate the entry of private companies and investors into the field of physical education is to create financial incentives for them, such as tax incentives.	Tax incentives for private companies.
In order to achieve greater productivity and efficiency in marketing initiatives in school sports, activities should not be carried out in isolation; rather, relevant organizations should strive to develop student sports through collaboration and cooperation with each other.	Development of interdepartmental communication processes and collaboration.
Relevant organizations involved in the marketing process of school sports should provide necessary assurances for profitability and return on investment for stakeholders and should have plans in place to ensure this.	Designing financial return programs.
All marketing activities of relevant organizations and entities should be clearly defined so that their performance in marketing school sports can be assessed accordingly.	Clarification of the roles of various institutions.
Student sports Olympiads serve as a reflection of the entire spectrum of physical education. Therefore, qualitatively, the level of their competitions should be elevated to attract greater financial support from sponsors and stakeholders to participate in these events.	Improving the quality of student sports Olympiads
Unfortunately, in the marketing of student sports, we lack transparent and effective regulations, which has led to a decrease in investment from stakeholders in this area.	Optimizing upstream regulations in the field of school sports marketing.

3.1. Causal conditions

The emergence of the phenomenon or class centrism is attributed to certain conditions pertaining to certain groups and their characteristics that influence the core issue. In this study, the necessities and challenges necessitating the design of a model for the development of school sports marketing were considered as the underlying conditions, including economic stability and sustainability, media management, and knowledge-based economy in sports, as observable in Table 3.

Table 3. Causal conditions of Model of the Economic discourse of school sports.

Central Coding of Themes	Items	Concepts
Causal conditions	Economic stability and sustainability	Creating a business-friendly environment / Political and economic stability / Support for diversity and competition / Sustainable financial resource management / Optimal utilization of available resources / Sound financial planning
	Media management	Promoting physical education through mass media / Coverage of student sports news / Live broadcasting of major events / Production of relevant content / Active presence in the virtual space
	Knowledge-based economy in sports	Expansion of research initiatives / Futurology in physical education / Support for research activities in student sports / Enhancement of creative and talented forces / Utilization of sports elites in decision-making / Knowledge-centered program and actions

3.2. Contextual conditions

Table 4 illustrates the concepts and principles of background conditions. Background conditions represent a specific set of characteristics of school sports marketing that facilitate development conditions. In the current study, sports governance, institutional interaction and communication, and entrepreneurship and innovation in sports were selected as background conditions.

Table 4. Contextual conditions of Model of the Economic discourse of school sports.

Central Coding of Themes	Items	Concepts
Contextual conditions	Sports governance	International interactions in educational sports investment / Localization of successful models / Sports industry growth / Increasing the share of sports in GDP / Sports marketing activities / Promotion of sports goods and services
	Institutional interaction and communication	Development of cross-sectoral communication processes and collaboration / Federations' synergy with other organizations / Involvement of philanthropists and grassroots organizations in building sports facilities
	Entrepreneurship and innovation in sports	Increasing employment through entrepreneurial ventures in production / Support for sports-related startups / Diversification and development of revenue sources / Advancement of marketing and branding

3.3. Intervening conditions

The conditions that strategies are influenced by encompass a set of mediating and intermediary variables; moreover, intervening conditions are structural conditions that facilitate or restrict the involvement of other factors and have a general and overarching nature (Corbin & Strauss, 2014). In this study, factors of cultural development and economic resilience were identified in schools.

Table 5. Intervening conditions of Model of the Economic discourse of school sports.

Central Coding of Themes	Items	Concepts
Intervening conditions	Cultural development	Institutionalization of the positive position of sports in the school curriculum / Interest of school managers and staff in sports / Increasing interest of students in sports and physical activities / Enhancing society's attitude towards sports
	Economic resilience in schools	The necessity of attention to the school economy / Balanced development of school facilities / Financial participation of students in school affairs / Reforming consumption patterns / Support for domestic production

3.4. Strategies

Strategies are a set of measures adopted for managing or developing the phenomenon under study. As presented in Table 6, in this study, the strategies of event branding, stakeholder management, public-private partnership, human resource development, marketing program agility, and revising and amending regulations were identified.

Table 6. Strategies of Model of the Economic discourse of school sports.

Central Coding of Themes	Items	Concepts
Strategies	Event branding	Improving the quality of student sports Olympiads / Utilizing appropriate logos and emblems / Enhancing service quality / Designing and updating programs / Upgrading the incentive and reward system at events / Smart selection of host cities / Establishing an online platform for registration and management of student sports Olympiads / Effective advertising / Offering special prizes and attractions
	Stakeholder management	Supporting physical education teachers / Improving relationships with investment companies / Supporting elite student athletes / Holding sessions with investors and stakeholders / Building trust for investors
	Public-private partnership	Financial incentives for private companies / Privatization and reducing government intervention / Financial support from the private sector for student sports / Ensuring capital return and profitability for the private sector
	Human resource development	Optimal training for administrative staff and school managers / Strengthening marketing skills of education administrators / Updating marketing knowledge in financial departments / Holding training workshops
	Marketing program agility	Developing transparent and simple guidelines / Designing financial return programs / Strategic and long-term thinking / Designing long-term income-generating contracts / Clarifying the roles of various institutions / Establishing a unified income generation system in physical education / Attracting financial supporters
	Reviewing and amending regulations	Lack of supportive laws / Optimizing upstream laws in school sports marketing / Facilitating licensing processes / Eliminating conflicting-interest-supporting laws

3.5. Consequences

These variables represent the outcomes and results arising from the adoption of strategies, and in fact, the implementation of these strategies leads to consequences.

According to Table 7, the promotion of economic thinking in sports, the development of physical education, the organization of school sports equipment, performance monitoring and supervision, and the development of talent identification management in schools are extracted as outcomes of the economic discourse pattern in school sports.

Table 7. Consequences of Model of the Economic discourse of school sports.

Central Coding of Themes	Items	Concepts
Consequences	Promotion of economic thinking in sports	Fostering a sports-oriented mindset among philanthropists, NGOs, and the private sector/Cultivating awareness among marketing and advertising companies/Eliminating the narrow and individualistic views of some managers
	Development of physical education	Enhancing the efficacy and overall physical and mental performance of students/Improving the effectiveness of physical education teachers and physical education courses in education/Enhancing the performance and elevating the position of education in society
	Organization of school sports equipment	Continuous improvement of sports infrastructure in schools/Providing support and consumable equipment for physical education/Securing suitable facilities and halls for physical education/Maintaining proper upkeep of facilities and equipment/Allocating special sports facilities for students/Establishing new and standardized competitive infrastructures
	Performance monitoring and supervision	Financial transparency in sports (expenses and revenues)/Establishing appropriate control and oversight mechanisms/Serious pursuit of financial corruption cases/Financial performance evaluation/Evaluation of students' sports achievements
	Development of talent identification management in schools	Facilitating talent management and sports development/Identifying sports talents in schools/Introducing talented students to prominent clubs/Comprehensive support for talented students.

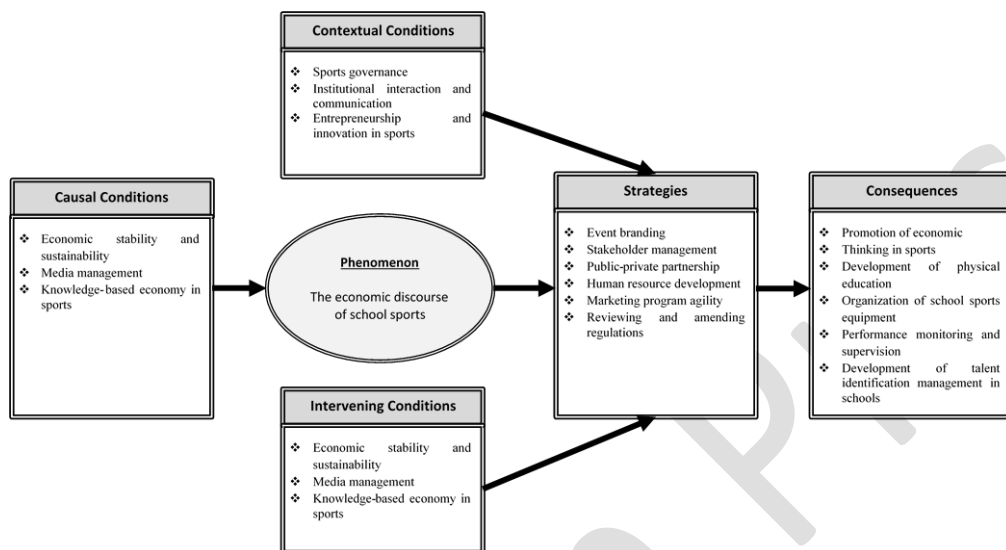


Figure 1. Categories of axial coding in six axes: core category, causal conditions, contextual conditions, intervening conditions, strategies, and consequences.

4. Discussion and conclusion

The aim of the current research was to present a paradigmatic model for the marketing development of school sports. School sports marketing, or generally physical education, has thus far been neglected both theoretically and in terms of legal and infrastructural considerations, due to the specific nature of the country's educational system. It should be prioritized and utilize the unique capacity of school physical education across all its domains, including physical education classes and student competitions. There appears to be considerable potential in the education system, and the interest of stakeholders indicates that legal barriers to the development of school sports marketing should be removed, and facilitative strategies for revenue generation should be proposed to foster greater flourishing of this crucial sector of the country's sports.

In this context, the research findings indicated that three categories—economic stability and sustainability, media management, and knowledge-based economy in sports—are highly influential in the development of school sports marketing, referred to as causal factors. The results obtained from the present study were in line with the findings of Bahrami and Kiani (2023) and Dastoom et al. (2020). Bahrami and Kiani (2023) stated in their research findings that the use of social media impacts sports marketing (Bahrami & Kiani, 2023). Dastoom et al. (2020) also noted that the country's sports have significant potential capabilities for transitioning to a knowledge-based economy. However, achieving a knowledge-based economy requires more crucial and specialized infrastructure, structures, and investments

(Dastoom et al., 2020). Economic stability and sustainability are crucial for creating a stable platform for the development of student sports, improving the economy and employment, and achieving economic growth. This is essential because sustainable economic development is necessary to confidently advance in marketing development. The concept of media management refers to the efficient use of media and modern technologies to develop school sports marketing, aiming to enhance the image of student sports among the public and investor companies through advertising and utilizing available information resources. Mass media play a significant role in this regard. Moreover, student sports can be recognized as a vital factor in developing a knowledge-based economy. This fosters a dynamic and innovative environment in sports, creating conditions for realizing personal ideas and small businesses, thereby strengthening the knowledge-based economy. Hence, supporting student sports and providing a suitable environment for marketing development can be considered strategies for advancing the knowledge-based economy in the realm of sports and student sports.

The categories of sports governance, institutional interaction and communication, and entrepreneurship and innovation in sports were introduced as contextual conditions in the present study. The results obtained from the research were in line with the findings of Norouzi Seyed Hossini et al. (2024), Shahmansouri et al. (2021), and Ahmady et al. (2018). Norouzi Seyed Hossini et al. (2024) also stated in their research results that the identified categories for capacities and new methods in sports entrepreneurship provide a roadmap for entrepreneurs, stakeholders, and policymakers to navigate the competitive and dynamic environment of the sports business (Norouzi Seyed Hossini et al., 2024). Shahmansouri et al. (2021) found that the use of creative and innovative methods by managers of sports complexes can contribute to profitability and customer satisfaction (Shahmansouri et al., 2021). Ahmady et al. (2018) stated that identifying the factors of sports governance leads to prioritizing and organizing actions in sports federations (Ahmady et al., 2018). Student sports, like any other system, require the formulation of comprehensive policies within the framework of the country's sports governance, which includes overarching goals, strategies, and operational plans. This ensures awareness of the path forward while avoiding the waste of financial, human, physical, and informational resources. In this regard, student sports policies must be linked with macro sports policies to promote the development of community sports within a general framework. Institutional interaction and communication can be a significant factor in the development of school sports marketing. Various organizations such as schools, federations, companies, and other institutions can create an environment for the development of school sports in the educational setting through cooperation and resource sharing. For instance, sports federations can assist schools by providing sports education programs and plans to offer suitable and attractive sports programs for their students. Additionally, various companies and organizations can support student athletes by providing financial support and participating in the provision of facilities, helping them to flourish as professional athletes in the future. Furthermore, if different organizations and institutions can collaborate and provide the necessary resources for the development of student sports, they can play a role in the

revenue generation of sports institutions and improve the state of student sports in the country. On the other hand, entrepreneurship and innovation in sports can contribute to the development of school sports marketing. Given the increasing growth of the sports industry, entrepreneurship and innovation in this field will provide good job and financial opportunities. Examples include the creation of startups in the educational sports technology sector, the production and sale of innovative sports equipment, and the provision of technology-based sports services for athletes, all of which will contribute to the development of school sports marketing.

Intervening conditions are another factor that influences the research strategies, and in this study, the categories of cultural development and the resistance economy in schools were central to the intervening conditions. The results obtained were in line with the findings of Savari et al. (2021) and Hajiheydari & Nazari (2021). Savari et al. (2021) concluded in their research that motivational, individual, facilities, structural and managerial, socio-cultural, and economic factors are respectively the determinants of the student health model. This study underscores the importance of considering various factors in designing the school sports marketing development model (Savari et al., 2021). Hajiheydari & Nazari (2021) also stated that to implement significant economic policies in managerial domains such as sports, it is necessary to foster culture, create a positive outlook in society, and utilize the maximum scientific, geographical, indigenous, and sociological capacities (Hajiheydari & Nazari, 2021). Cultural development is another intervening factor in the present research; the interviewees' opinions indicate that institutionalizing and enhancing sports in schools, and improving managers' and officials' attitudes towards sports, play a role in the development of school sports marketing. The resistance economy always envisions an economy capable of withstanding potential damages to its structure. To achieve such an economy in schools, a long-term view of economic policies in schools is necessary, and the economic infrastructure must be designed so that in the future, schools can pursue their goals and visions in various fields.

In this research, the categories of event branding, stakeholder management, public-private partnership, human resource development, marketing program agility, and reviewing and amending regulations were considered as strategies to control and respond to the phenomenon under study. The results obtained from the research were aligned with the findings of Dost Mohamadi et al. (2023), Mirzaei Kalar et al. (2020), and Dost Mohamadi et al. (2020). Dost Mohamadi et al. (2023) indicated in their study that the most critical factors in the management of school sports marketing in Iran are advertising for competitions, attracting financial support, information systems, brand development, and event quality. These findings highlight the importance of effective planning for the development of the quality of sports events and the design and registration of sports brands specific to schools (Dost Mohamadi et al., 2023). Mirzaei Kalar et al. (2020) showed in their research that the development of school sports is a dynamic process, and to achieve this and the outcomes of development, stakeholders, strategies, processes, and pathways of sports development must work together. Therefore, policymakers and planners should consider stakeholders, strategies, processes, and pathways of sports development when formulating policies and

programs for the development of school sports (Mirzaei Kalar et al., 2020). Dost Mohamadi et al. (2020) concluded in their research that by creating an appropriate school sports marketing strategy, attracting financial sponsors, and improving the services offered in school sports, the groundwork for the development of school sports marketing can be laid (Dost Mohamadi et al., 2020). In this regard, event branding of student events can be seen as one of the effective ways to attract financial sponsors and material and spiritual support. This method can facilitate the provision of standard equipment, regular organization of competitions, improvement of the quality of school sports, and other related activities. Overall, event branding leads to increased attention and recognition of school sports. On the other hand, stakeholder management in school sports (including parents, coaches, students, investors, etc.) can improve the conditions of school sports and consequently contribute to the development of school sports marketing. For instance, managing parents can encourage students to participate in sports activities and purchase sports equipment, while proper management of coaches and school administrators can improve the conditions of sports training and create opportunities for participation in sports competitions. As a result, effective stakeholder management increases students' interest and motivation to participate in sports activities, which was introduced as one of the strategies of the research. The public-private partnership is another strategy of the current research. A review of the privatization literature in sports shows that almost all countries worldwide attach great importance to the role and position of privatization in the sports sector. This concept in grassroots sports can take the form of cooperation with private companies to promote physical education in commercial environments or as investment in various aspects of school sports. According to the research participants, establishing an educational system among human resources involved in the process of school sports marketing development is crucial. Education provides a suitable opportunity to develop knowledge and skills, resulting in effects such as empowerment and self-efficacy for individuals and organizations in the field of marketing. Marketing program agility was identified as the final strategy in the present research, referring to the continuous improvement and updating of principles and programs. This concept focuses on designing and outlining marketing programs with a strategic and long-term approach. Additionally, this process should concentrate on creating, scheduling, and implementing specific actions while providing criteria to track the progress of marketing activities. Reviewing and amending regulations is another factor essential for the development of school sports marketing. These revisions may include macro-level restrictions on investments in physical education or limitations on revenue generation for schools. Lawmakers can facilitate the development of the student sports industry by drafting and approving appropriate laws and guidelines. Consequently, reviewing and amending regulations can play a significant role in increasing revenue for student sports and fostering a healthy and fair competitive environment in this field.

Promotion of economic thinking in sports, development of physical education, organization of school sports equipment, performance monitoring and supervision, and development of talent identification management in schools are the outcomes of

the economic discourse model for school sports. The results obtained from the research align with the findings of Maadi et al. (2024), Sarlak & Kaveh (2022), Ghanbari Firouzabadi et al. (2020), and Rastogi et al. (2017). Maadi et al. (2024) in their research results stated that causal factors include the school environment and market ecosystem, human capital, culture building, and infrastructure as contextual factors. Advertising campaigns, branding, public relations, and direct marketing were identified as intervening factors, while financing, promotion, educational structure, and identifying marketing methods were recognized as strategies. The outcomes of this model included the economic development of education, empowerment, and improvement of sports services (Maadi et al., 2024). Sarlak and Kaveh (2022), by explaining the challenges of educational sports in the country, showed that the shortage of human resources and the lack of sports facilities and equipment are the main obstacles to the development of educational sports. The research results indicated that comprehensive planning is needed to address these issues since the development of educational sports plays an important role in shaping students' lifestyles (Sarlak & Kaveh, 2022). Ghanbari Firouzabadi et al. (2020), in their research findings, introduced human resources, financial resources, space and equipment, implementation of physical education lessons, and extracurricular programs as causal factors. Managerial, socio-cultural, media and technology, and scientific sports components were presented as contextual conditions affecting the development of student sports. Additionally, financial, political, and economic components were identified as intervening conditions, while structural development, managerial actions, human resource development, revenue development, space and equipment development, cultural development, and extracurricular program development were presented as strategies for the development of student sports (Ghanbari Firouzabadi et al., 2020). Rastogi et al. (2017), in their examination of the state of physical education development in schools in various countries, showed that despite good methods and programs in the area of school sports development, there are many failures in development programs. This issue is related to the absence of a long-term and comprehensive program. These findings indicate that long-term and comprehensive planning for the development of school sports is essential (Rastogi et al., 2017). From the interviewees' perspective, promotion of economic thinking in sports was one of the most important outcomes of the present research, which means having a correct understanding and awareness of economic concepts in sports, to be achieved through discourse in society. Therefore, the prerequisite for developing the economic space of sports is discourse creation and its promotion. The primary goal of the development of physical education is to promote collective participation among students, and subsequently, to identify and develop sports talents, promote the culture of a healthy and active lifestyle, and strengthen social cohesion among students, and consequently in society. Therefore, it is clear that applying the school sports marketing development model will lead to the development of physical education. Organization of school sports equipment was identified as another strategy of the research. Given the importance and role of standard spaces and equipment in the quality of sports activities, necessary support should be provided to meet the needs or standardize

sports facilities by officials and organizations. Success and achieving the expected goals require performance monitoring and supervision because with proper monitoring and evaluation, the progress of individuals and organizations can be measured, and appropriate control and supervisory mechanisms can address violations and deficiencies. The development of talent identification management in schools is a foundational element for professional and championship sports, which has not progressed as expected in Iran. Undoubtedly, this talent identification can be used as a platform for marketing development through school sports. By identifying students' sports talents, schools can provide opportunities for participation in sports competitions and support athletes to develop their talents.

Based on the findings of the research and the necessity for developing school sports marketing, it is proposed that relevant agencies and organizations prioritize the implementation of a transparent and desirable marketing system for student sports nationwide through increased interaction and mutual coordination. Considering the need for legislative review and amendments, it is recommended that facilitative resolutions and guidelines regarding revenue generation for student sports be drafted by legislators and policymakers. Furthermore, to synergize with the private sector, the Student Sports Federation, in collaboration with the Ministry of Education, should create conditions for private companies to invest in educational sports for long-term investments. To complement and strengthen these strategies, the development of diverse and comprehensive marketing plans is suggested. These plans should encompass various sporting activities to attract a broader spectrum of students. Additionally, establishing supportive financial structures such as support funds and attracting sponsors to finance school sports programs can reduce dependence on government budgets and create financial sustainability. Moreover, investment in the development and renovation of school sports facilities and equipment aims to provide a suitable and attractive environment for student sports activities, among other proposed recommendations.

Regarding the limitations of the research, it can be noted that some interviewees, due to their work commitments and busy schedules, were unable to allocate sufficient time for more comprehensive and in-depth interviews. This issue resulted in the potential loss of valuable information and important details, preventing a complete exploration of all aspects of the research topic. To achieve more comprehensive and complete results, it was necessary to conduct interviews with individuals holding high-level managerial and decision-making positions in the fields of sports and education in the country. However, there were limitations in accessing these individuals, which prevented us from benefiting from their broad and strategic perspectives. These limitations could affect the comprehensiveness and depth of the research results. Therefore, it is suggested that in future studies, these limitations be addressed through more precise planning and the use of alternative methods to access interviewees.

References

- Ahmady, b., Yousefi, b., & Eydi, h. (2018). The Mixed Analysis of Indicators and Sport Governance Observer Index. *Sport Management Journal*, 10(4), 775-793. <https://doi.org/10.22059/jsm.2017.227519.1787>
- Bahrami, s., & Kiani, m. (2023). The Impact of Social Media and the Internet on the Marketing of Sporting Events. *Communication Management in Sport Media*, 10(3), 15-31. <https://doi.org/10.30473/jsm.2021.50368.1369>
- Bedard, C., Hanna, S., & Cairney, J. (2020). A longitudinal study of sport participation and perceived social competence in youth. *Journal of Adolescent Health*, 66(3), 352-359. <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/31732276/>
- Beneli, L. d. M., Proni, M. W., & Montagner, P. C. (2017). Challenges for sport pedagogy due to the influence of marketing on contemporary sport. *Journal of Physical Education*, 27. <https://www.scielo.br/j/jpe/a/gt5FXsizr6WwzsGnfp9hDJhL/?lang=en>
- Camiré, M., & Kendellen, K. (2016). Coaching for positive youth development in high school sport. In *Positive youth development through sport* (pp. 126-136). Routledge. <https://www.scirp.org/reference/referencespapers?referenceid=2812873>
- Corbin, J., & Strauss, A. (2014). *Basics of qualitative research: Techniques and procedures for developing grounded theory*. Sage publications.
- Cronin, L., Marchant, D., Johnson, L., Huntley, E., Kosteli, M. C., Varga, J., & Ellison, P. (2020). Life skills development in physical education: A self-determination theory-based investigation across the school term. *Psychology of Sport and Exercise*, 49, 101711. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1469029219308209>
- Danaeefard, H., & Mozafari, Z. (2008). Improving validity and reliability in qualitative management research: reflection on research audit strategies. *Management research*, 1(1), 131-162.
- Darnell, S. C., Field, R., Kidd, B., Darnell, S. C., Field, R., & Kidd, B. (2019). Sport-for-Development and the International Community. *The History and Politics of Sport-for-Development: Activists, Ideologues and Reformers*, 183-207. <https://library.olympics.com/Default/doc/SYRACUSE/177185/the-history-and-politics-of-sport-for-development-activists-ideologues-and-reformers-simon-c-darnell?lg=en-GB>
- Dastoom, s., Ramzani Nezhad, r., & Sadeghi Boroujerdi, s. (2020). Designing a Quadruple Helix model of Government, University, Industry and Society for development of a knowledge-based economy in the Iran's sport. *Iranian journal of management sciences*, 15(58), 81-107. http://journal.iams.ir/article_331_ba6fb10a3f11126769253a4d00db2cdb.pdf
- Dost Mohamadi, H., Esmaeilzadeh Ghandhari, M. R., Fahim Dovin, H., & Paymani Zad, H. (2020). Identifying the components of student sports marketing and designing a model using an interpretive structural method. *Sport Sciences Quarterly*, 37(12), 68-84. <http://sanad.iau.ir/fa/Article/1099311>

- Dost Mohamadi, H., Esmailzadeh Ghandhari, M. R., Fahim Dovin, H., & Paymani Zad, H. (2023). Identifying Factors and Presenting the Marketing Model of Iranian Student Sports. *Karafan Quarterly Scientific Journal*, 20(2), 637-656. <https://doi.org/10.48301/kssa.2022.341706.2102>
- Eagleman, A. N. (2013). Acceptance, motivations, and usage of social media as a marketing communications tool amongst employees of sport national governing bodies. *Sport Management Review*, 16(4), 488-497. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S1441352313000120>
- Eizadi, A., Shabani Bahar, G., Goodarzi, M., & Honari, H. (2017). Development of Marketing Strategic Planning for Planning for Iranian Football Premier League Clubs with SWOT Analysis. *Applied Research in Sport Management*, 6(2), 21-34. https://arsmb.journals.pnu.ac.ir/article_4294.html?lang=en
- Ghanbari Firouzabadi, A., amani, a., reihani, m., & Sardroodian, M. (2020). Designing a Strategic Model for Student Sport Development. *Research on Educational Sport*, 8(20), 179-204. https://res.ssrc.ac.ir/article_1946.html?lang=en
- Hajiheydari, V., & Nazari, R. (2021). Representing Model of Resistance Economy in Iranian Sport. *Scientific Quarterly Journal of Applied Researches in Sports Management*, 9(3), 69-82. https://arsmb.journals.pnu.ac.ir/article_7466.html?lang=en
- Hamidi, M., Rajabi Nooshabadi, H., Alidoust Ghahfarokhi, E., & Zeinizadeh, M. (2018). Codification a Strategy Map of student sports federation with the approach BSC. *Sport Management Studies*, 10(49), 139-158. https://smrj.ssrc.ac.ir/article_1134.html
- Javidi, Y., Jamshidian, L. S., Torkfar, A., & MirHoseini, S. M. A. (2021). Phenomenological analysis of the factors affecting the improvement of public participation in school sports. *JOURNAL OF SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION*, 9(2), 416-441. https://journals.uok.ac.ir/article_61871.html
- Kamalvand, A., & Afshari, M. (2021). Analysis of effective factors on marketing development in student sport. *Research on Educational Sport*, 9(22), 261-304. https://res.ssrc.ac.ir/article_1911_en.html
- Lee, S., Kim, Y., & Heere, B. (2018). Sport team emotion: Conceptualization, scale development and validation. *Sport Management Review*, 21(4), 363-376. <https://ideas.repec.org/a/eee/spomar/v21y2018i4p363-376.html>
- Maadi, M., Safania, A. M., farahani, A., Ghasemi, H., & Doroudian, A. A. (2024). The pattern of integrated marketing communications in physical education and sports of the Ministry of Education. *Research on Educational Sport*, -. <https://doi.org/10.22089/res.2024.14491.2403>
- Miller, J., Meaney, K., & Podlog, L. (2012). Enhancing sport marketing research service-learning using Kolb's experiential education model. *International Journal of Sport Management*, 13(1), 23-43. https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Leslie-Podlog/publication/271967084_Enhancing_sport_marketing_research_service-learning_using_Kolb's_Experiential_Education_Theory/links/54d83c960cf2

[46475819a87f/Enhancing-sport-marketing-research-service-learning-using-Kolbs-Experiential-Education-Theory.pdf](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2014.08.001)

- Minten, S., & Forsyth, J. (2014). The careers of sports graduates: Implications for employability strategies in higher education sports courses. *Journal of Hospitality, Leisure, Sport & Tourism Education*, 15, 94-102. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S1473837614000185>
- Mirzaei Kalar, A., Hematinezhad, M., & Ramezaninezhad, R. (2020). Designing the Model of student sport development in Iran. *Research on Educational Sport*, 8(18), 41-62. https://res.ssric.ac.ir/article_2072.html?lang=en
- Nasrollahi Ghadim, A., Ghasemi, H., & Farahani, A. (2022). Designing a Model for Integrated Marketing Communication Tools (IMC) for Wrestling of Iran. *Sport Management Journal*, 14(4), 20-21. https://jsm.ut.ac.ir/article_81738.html?lang=en
- Norouzi Seyyed hossini, R., Roumiani, m., & Roumiani, S. (2024). The Framework for the Development of new Entrepreneurship in Sports: From Idea to Action. *Journal of Entrepreneurship Development*, -. <https://doi.org/10.22059/jed.2024.365400.654266>
- Pourabdi, J., Saatchian, V., & Kashtidar, M. (2021). Explaining the status of sport for all in the thought of the Supreme Leader of the revolution with the approach of content analysis. *Research on Educational Sport*, 9(24), 273-300.
- Rabiei, f., Afroogh, f., & Afroozeh, m. s. (2023). Analysis of school sports discourse in Iran. *Research on Educational Sport*, 11(30), 107-138. <https://doi.org/10.22089/res.2022.11947.2211>
- Rastogi, C. K., Sharma, S. K., Patel, A., Parthasarathy, G., Pala, R. G. S., Kumar, J., & Sivakumar, S. (2017). Dopant induced stabilization of metastable zircon-type tetragonal LaVO₄. *The Journal of Physical Chemistry C*, 121(30), 16501-16512. <https://pubs.acs.org/doi/abs/10.1021/acs.jpcc.7b04508>
- Rosales, R. A., & Tito, R. G. (2022). Sports Marketing Communications in South America. *Marketing Communications and Brand Development in Emerging Economies Volume I: Contemporary and Future Perspectives*, 103-119. https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-030-88678-3_6
- Sarlak, S., & Kaveh, F. (2022). Explaining the challenges of educational sports in the country with emphasis on orienting students' lifestyles. *Sociology and lifestyle management*, 7(18), 125-139. https://sls.tabrizu.ac.ir/article_13272.html?lang=en
- Savari, A., Bahrami, S., & Eydi, H. (2021). Designing a Health-Based Model of Student-Based on Sports in 1404 Horizon. *Research on Educational Sport*, 9(23), 73-98. <https://doi.org/10.22089/res.2020.8294.1790>
- Shahmansouri, E., Saadatmandi, J., & Salehi, S. (2021). prioritize and analyze the role of marketing mix elements on the income level of private sports facilities in Qom Province. *Sports Marketing Studies*, 2(3), 92-122. https://gsmmr.uok.ac.ir/article_62012.html?lang=en
- Vafaei Moghadam, A., Dousti, M., Fakhri, F., & Jafari, M. (2018). Obstacles to sport development in Mazandaran province schools. *Journal of sport management*

and motor behavior, 14(28), 167-182.
https://msb.journals.umz.ac.ir/article_1983.html?lang=en

Winand, M., & Anagnostopoulos, C. (2019). *Research handbook on sport governance*. Edward Elgar Publishing. <https://www.elgar.com/shop/gbp/research-handbook-on-sport-governance-9781786434814.html>

Zohrevandian, K. (2021). designing model of Conversion of marketing capabilities to function in football clubs of Iran Premier League. *Journal of Sport Management and Motor Behavior*, 17(34), 164-145.
https://msb.journals.umz.ac.ir/article_3533.html

Zolfaghari, M., Nobakht Ramazani, Z., & Naderinasab, M. (2023). Designing a sports marketing model to advance the economic goals of Iranian Premier League clubs. *Sport Management Journal*, 15(1), 144-126.
<https://doi.org/10.22059/jsm.2021.293504.2386>